Shasta Agness EIS Talking Points
May 28, 2019

- The project area is a 93,000-acre footprint that proposes numerous restoration actions, including thinning, prescribed fire, riparian and aquatic restoration, the conservation and acceleration of late-successional forest, and sustainable recreation and roads.

- The project was designed with early and consistent input from the Wild Rivers Coast Forest Collaborative.

- As a result of past fire exclusion and previously vegetation management practices, current ecosystem conditions have departed from natural conditions. The result is that some of these rare, uncommon, highly-specialized and unique habitat types are in decline and at risk of being lost or greatly reduced. Oak and pine savannahs and woodlands have suffered substantial losses in both spatial distribution and ecological integrity.

- The Rogue River watershed is an important aquatic and riparian corridor and provides habitat for endangered species, including Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast coho salmon, marble murrelet and northern spotted owl.

- The project area also supports an abundance of high-quality recreation opportunities associated with its proximity to the Wild Rogue Wilderness and two wild and scenic rivers (The Rogue and Illinois Rivers). Recreation facilities and roads require maintenance and work to address user demand. Campgrounds and recreation areas need improvement to meet use demands and address public safety, vandalism and resource impacts.

- The Preferred Alternative (1) proposes to close 10 miles of road to public use (from Level 2 (open) to Level 1 (open only to FS admin use) and decommission 6 miles of road. The roads considered for closure/decommissioning were originally identified by Travel Management Subpart A, and then further prioritized (relative to this project) depending on: where road-generated sediment impacted streams, where there was potential for catastrophic failure of a drainage structure, where there was a high risk of spreading Port-Orford cedar root disease, or hydrology had been detrimentally affected by a road. It is worth noting that there is currently a total of 185 miles of accessible Forest Roads within the project footprint. Proposing closing 10 miles of road and decommissioning 6 miles of roads (for a total of 16 miles of road) equates to closing/decommissioning 9% of existing roads within the project footprint.

- Alternative 1 proposes to decommission Billings Creek Dispersed Campground, Illahee Campground and decommission the Nancy Creek Trail. It proposes to maintain Foster Bar recreation site and boat ramp, provide trail improvements include Upper Rogue Trailhead, changes to allow OHV use on two Forest roads connecting to trails (4.3 miles) and road improvements at Shasta Costa dispersed campground.

- 27 miles of in-stream aquatic restoration work is being proposed in all alternatives

- To accomplish unique habitat restoration and acceleration of late successional characteristics, a combination of commercial and non-commercial methods of vegetation treatments, as well as the use of prescribed fire, will be necessary to promote white and black oak restoration. The project proposes to harvest trees within proposed oak stands that are 80-120 years old with some up to 140-years old and up to 28" in diameter. In all stands, existing nesting/roosting/foraging habitat, large legacy tress and existing snags would remain.

- Mechanical fuels treatments and prescribed fire will be utilized to reintroduce low-intensity burn in areas where biodiversity levels are linked to more frequent fire regimes. These treatments will not only benefit ecosystem health, they will also serve to protect local private land and residences within the Wildland Urban Interface.

- Implementation of this project would require a Red Tree Vole Plan and a project-specific amendment (to exempt tree harvest in unique oak and pine units located in late-successional reserve stands over 80 years old) from one Northwest Forest Plan silviculture standard.